

Thursday 11 May 2023

FAR Australia continues to develop capacity and capability with senior appointment

Australian based field applied researcher, developer and extension provider announced today the appointment of Dr Ben Jones as Senior Research Manager.

Announcing this latest appointment, Nick Poole, FAR Australia's managing director said Dr Jones' skills and expertise will add significantly to the organisation's skills set in higher science, precision agriculture (PA) as well as in the crop modelling space.

"We are delighted to welcome Ben to the FAR Australia team", says Mr Poole. "Ben brings with him a wealth of both boots-on-the-ground farming experience along with a breadth of knowledge in software development in PA and research agronomy more generally. Whilst Dr Jones will be involved in a number of our research portfolios, his primary focus will be to lead one of the Grains Research and Development Corporation's (GRDC) latest investments: Predicting wheat production and development in high yield potential environments.

"This project aims to leverage data already collected from high rainfall zones, supplemented by targeted physiological research, to benchmark the genetic yield potential of Australian spring wheat and local/imported long-season wheat varieties under high input conditions. These understandings are to be captured and built into the APSIM model in order for it to become an enduring foundational capacity for Australian agriculture."

Dr Jones grew up on his family farm in the Victorian Mallee and is a well-respected member of the Australian farming fraternity. Ben began his career there, working on research topics in agronomy, precision agriculture and farming systems with the Department of Primary Industries and farming systems groups, after completing a PhD in wheat physiology in 2005. He founded PASource, one of Australia's first online precision agriculture businesses, and went on to have a range of experiences in the software development area. He most recently lectured in agronomy and ag-tech at Marcus Oldham College.

Dr Jones said "It's exciting to be back in research, and an enjoyable challenge putting FAR Australia's high quality research data to the task of improving the modelling of high yielding wheat crops."

Dr Jones commenced his new appointment in April and will be based at FAR Australia's head office in Bannockburn, Victoria.

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Contact details:

Nick Poole
Managing Director, FAR Australia
Ph: 0499 888 066
Email: nick.poole@faraustralia.com.au

Rachel Hamilton
Communications and Events Manager, FAR Australia
Ph: 0428 843 456
Email: rachel.hamilton@faraustralia.com.au